

there were also some Greyheaded Wagtails (*M. f. thunbergi*) and a few Yellowheaded Wagtails (*M. citreola citreola*). My eye alighted on a 'Yellowheaded Wagtail', when I realised that in fact it had a white head. I had it under observation for over one minute presuming it to be an aberrant specimen of the Yellowheaded Wagtail. But when I consulted the FAUNA OF BRITISH INDIA I found listed the Whiteheaded Wagtail (*M. f. leucocephala*), which apart from the white head, generally resembles *M. f. beema*. This was almost certainly the bird I saw.

The only previous record of *M. f. leucocephala*, according to Stuart Baker and Ripley (SYNOPSIS OF THE BIRDS OF INDIA AND PAKISTAN), was one shot by Whistler on 3 May 1913 in Jhelum District, West Punjab.

Stuart Baker says the Whiteheaded Wagtail has been found breeding in Mongolia and Manchuria in May, June, and July. The first recorded specimen was taken in Altai.

Has anyone else seen it in India?

REUTERS,
27 PRITHVI RAJ ROAD,
NEW DELHI 11,
April 12, 1965.

PETER F. R. JACKSON

[Spring males are distinguishable from all other wagtails by the almost pure white crown, nape, and ear-coverts, the last with a faint greyish wash.—EDS.]

8. NOTES ON INDIAN BIRDS 4—ON THE VALIDITY OF *ZOOTHERA CITRINA AMADONI* (BISWAS)

In 1951, Biswas (*J. Bombay nat. Hist. Soc.* 49 : 661) described a new race of the Ground Thrush *Turdus citrinus amadoni* which was said to occur in Madhya Pradesh, Orissa, and north-eastern Madras Province. It was distinguished from the typical *Zoothera citrina citrina* (Latham) (Type locality : Cachar) by its white throat, and from *Z. c. cyanotus* (Jardine & Selby) (Type locality : Bangalore) by its larger wing and the comparative absence of the olive wash on the head. Ripley in 'The Thrushes', *Postilla* No. 13 (1952) Footnote to p. 37 and the SYNOPSIS (1961 : 527) synonymized this with *cyanotus* which is the only form accepted by him as resident in peninsular India.

Recently I had occasion to examine the specimens in the Bombay collection and was struck by the fact that several white-throated males, collected by Sálím Ali at Badrama and Simlipal Hills, Mayurbhanj, in Orissa, and at Bastar and Kanker in eastern Madhya Pradesh, differed prominently from those from further south and west in having their heads an unsullied orange-chestnut almost as bright as in the typical *citrina*.

No specimens from Chanda, Madhya Pradesh, the type locality of *amadoni* were available to me, but birds of both sexes south of a line from Songadh¹, Navsari District, Gujarat, to Vizagapatam on the east coast had smaller wings and a pronounced olive tinge on the head (rendering it more yellowish khaki than chestnut). I assumed that *amadoni* would be similar to those from Orissa and eastern Madhya Pradesh, and a short note resuscitating this race on these differences was sent to Dr. Biswas for his opinion. In his reply, Biswas maintained that all recently collected males of *amadoni* also had an olive tinge on the head and sent me 4 males from Balaghat, Madhya Pradesh, in support.

An examination of the material available (41 skins) inclines me to the following conclusions :

1. Birds from Orissa and eastern Madhya Pradesh are quite distinct from those from the rest of India, being larger than and having more orange-chestnut on the head than *cyanotus*, and deserve a name ;
2. Birds from Jubbulpore and Balaghat (the latter marked *amadoni* by Biswas) have slightly sullied heads, but can be separated from *cyanotus* by their larger wings and the greater amount of orange-chestnut on the head.

Biswas's type specimen, in the American Museum of Natural History, was collected by Elwes in 1867, and it is possible that 'foxing' has masked the olive tinge on the head as has happened in two females from Kanara (1890) and Bombay (1906) in the Bombay collection.

Though no specimens from Chanda are available, it may be accepted that they approach the Orissa birds in size and colour, as stated in the original description, and the race *amadoni* must be accepted, though it might have been better to place the type locality in Orissa. Its range would be as specified by Biswas (loc. cit.)—Madhya Pradesh, Orissa, and north-eastern Madras Province².

Throughout the ranges of *citrina*, *cyanotus*, and *amadoni* the females resemble the males, except that they average smaller, show a distinct olive tinge on the back between the head and the lower back, and perhaps have a slightly darker head. This last character may be due to the olive of the back extending on to the head.

I am grateful to the authorities of the Zoological Survey of India, Calcutta, and St. Xavier's High School, Bombay, for the loan of specimens from their collections.

75 ABDUL REHMAN STREET,
BOMBAY 3,
February 23, 1965.

HUMAYUN ABDULALI

¹The single specimen, a male, has been included with *cyanotus*, but the wing (116 mm.) is larger, and the head which is yellow rather than chestnut does not show the olive tinge.

² Now Andhra Pradesh.—Eds.